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- Business / B1 — SMC wins bid for Aussie dairy firm
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4M crank calls swamp Patrol 117 every year



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Former bank president found dead; suicide eyed

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Doris Dumlao

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Tuesday, April 13, 2005 • 48 pages | website: www.inq7.net

FPJ widow drops poll protest case

Susan says SC used technicality to conceal truth



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VAT support tied to antigraft drive, poll shows

PCA chief under fire for blocking P8.4-B coco project



Asean foreign ministers split on Burma role

Latin America may get its first pontiff

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Pope visit left deep imprint on Tondo parish

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Erap failed to eradicate jueteng, says witness

Indon terror suspect pleads not guilty; 3 others admit crime

Filipino Center in Hawaii struggling to pay $3.5-M debt

People losing faith GMA can fix fiscal woes, says survey

FILIPINOS are losing confidence in President Macapagal-Arroyo's ability to deal with a looming fiscal crisis in the country, according to an independent poll published yesterday.

The March 3-16 Pulse Asia poll of 1,200 adults showed only 21 percent felt the government has succeeded in staving off a fiscal crisis, while 49 percent disagreed and 30 percent were undecided.

The results suggest a "significant degree of public scepticism over the Arroyo administration's earlier public reassurances that it had the fiscal situation well in hand," the Manila-based group outfit said in a statement.

Congress is debating a proposed increase in value added tax (VAT), one of a series of revenue measures proposed by Arroyo last year. However, Congress has so far passed only two bills, including one raising excise taxes on liquor and tobacco products.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said Monday that the VAT bill, which raises the rate to 12 percent from 10 percent, should pass within the month.

Arroyo has warned that the country could be plunged into a fiscal crisis in a few years unless government revenues rise by at least P80 billion a year.

Pulse Asia noted that in an October-November survey, 37 percent of respondents had believed in the effectiveness of the government's response to rising debt and falling revenues.

In the latest report, it said 38 percent believed the threat of the fiscal crisis was real, while 31 percent believed the government was merely using it as a "bogeyman" and 31 percent were undecided.

These responses suggest that a sizeable number of Filipinos do not even recognize the gravity of the fiscal problem, Pulse Asia said.

Pulse Asia said 68 percent agreed that they "might support an increase in VAT if the government reduces corrupt and wasteful spending. **AFP**

Gov't stand on nat'l ID gets boost from new poll

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

GOVERNMENT'S plan to require Filipinos to have a national identification card got a boost from a survey showing that the public supports its use for fighting terrorism and trusts the government to protect privacy.

A Social Weather Stations survey showed three out of five Filipinos agree that having a national ID card would be a "big help in the fight against terrorism." About half of Filipinos believe that the government can be trusted to protect private information contained in the ID.

In the survey conducted on Feb. 25 to March 10, 60 percent either strongly or somewhat agreed when asked whether a national ID would be a big help against terrorism, with 21 percent saying they disagree. Eighteen percent were undecided.

Support for the national ID is high in the Visayas and among the upper social classes.

Visayas registered a net 53 percent agreement (agree minus disagree) to the national ID. In Metro Manila, there was a net agreement of 36 percent, out of the 58 percent who agree and 22 percent who disagree.

The rest of Luzon also gave a high score in favor of the national ID, a net of 37 percent while Mindanao registered a net agreement of 32 percent.

"Support for the national ID as a measure against terrorism is also high across socio-economic classes, with classed ABC and D showing stronger support than class E," SWS' Iremae Labucay said.

The ABC and D classes both gave a 40 percent net agreement to the ID but there was higher agreement to the proposal from the upper class.

But Labucay said agreement to the national ID as a tool against terrorism fluctuated since the SWS asked the question in November 2001, then in December 2002 and in the past two months.

"This year, agreement declined by 6 points while disapproval gained by the same percentage points," Labucay said in her report.

In November 2001, there was a net agreement of 31 percent which rose to 51 percent by December 2002.

Labucay said Visayas has consistently supported the national ID with a 36 percent net agreement in 2001 and 51 percent in 2002.

NEWSBRIEFS

Japanese shot dead

AN unidentified man shot dead a 51-year-old Japanese businessman who ran a nursing home in Cabuyao, Laguna, police said yesterday. Yoshio Ichimura, president of Fil-Geron Philippines Private Nursing Home, died en route to a hospital after he was shot Saturday night while riding in a jeep with his Filipina girlfriend and driver, regional police head Chief Superintendent Jesus Verzosa said. He was shot in the head with a .45 caliber pistol shortly after the jeep pulled to a halt at an unmanned police checkpoint in the nearby town of Calamba. Ichimura's companions were unhurt, police reported. Verzosa said he ordered a manhunt for the gunman. **AP**

Muslim trader rescued

SECURITY forces have rescued a Muslim businessman who was kidnapped in Lanao del Sur last week and arrested four suspects, a regional military official said yesterday. Sultan Jamail Rogong was rescued late Sunday and four of his kidnappers detained when their vehicle ran into a government checkpoint near the town of Malabang, Marine Brig. Gen. Ben Dolorfino said. "We recovered the victim alive and safe last night," Dolorfino told reporters yesterday. Rogong was abducted on April 7 and the gang demanded P1.5 million in ransom. After negotiations between the kidnappers and the victim's family failed, the military was tipped off that the captive would be moved from Paulas town to Ganassi town, leading to the rescue. **AFP**

IBP confab sets in Baguio

THE Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) is scheduled to hold its 10th annual convention in Baguio from April 19 to 23. IBP president Jose Anselmo Cadiz said more than 5,000 leaders of the legal community were expected to attend the convention, which will be held at the CAP-John Hay Convention Center. The theme of the convention—"Alleviating Poverty and Resolving the Fiscal Crisis: Challenges for the Legal System"— underscores the resolve of the legal community to take an active role in addressing the most pressing issues in the country, according to Cadiz. He said that while poverty and fiscal issues "appear to be mostly economic in nature, there is a lot that the legal system can do to address them." Part of this effort is to look at how the legal system is dealing with corruption, which contributes a lot to poverty and the fiscal deficit, Cadiz said.

FPJ widow drops poll protest case

From page A1

"inaccurate" and "unacceptable," she "no longer intends to avail [herself] of the final and ultimate remedy of the motion for reconsideration."

Sheer technicality

But for "posterity," Roces went on to hit the ruling which, she said, was based "not on merits … but based on sheer technicality … thereby sealing the truth forever."

She said the PET clearly opted to delve on the technicalities rather than ascertaining the "true will of the electorate" by letting the case go to its fruitful conclusion.

The court, she said, "opted to take the simple and easy way out by deciding to go technical … as if to wash its hands and just leave the true will of the Filipino people (expressed in the May elections) … in limbo."

Presumptive President

This situation, she said, paved the way for a "presumptive (P)resident" to continue governing the country.

Although the court, according to her, chose the easy path to avoid instability, she warned that "such washing of hands and easy way out could readily serve as the very fuse for a continuing instability."

In its ruling, the court said it strove to resolve Poe's electoral protest "without further delay to prevent popular unrest and avoid destabilization at the highest level."

Muzzled

"To muzzle the people's voice, under the guise of procedural technicalities and imagined instability" is something that Roces "as lay person, most sincerely, could not comprehend," the actress said.

She also contested the court's decision to base its ruling on Rule 14 of the PET Rules.

It provides that "[o]nly the registered candidate of the President or Vice President of the Philippines who received the second and third highest number of votes may contest the election of the President or Vice President, as the case may be, by filing a verified petition with the clerk of the Presidential Electoral Tribunal within (30) days after the proclamation of the winner."

Roces said her husband had complied with this when he, "as the admitted second placer, filed his protest within 30 days from the proclamation of the protestee."

Roces said she also could not understand why the court "effectively precluded anyone and everyone" from substituting for her "now."

The actress suffered another defeat, this time at the Sandiganbayan.

The antigraft court yesterday denied the request of lawyer Rene Saguisag to allow Roces to visit deposed President Joseph Estrada, who is detained in his rest house in Tanay, Rizal, on plunder charges. The late husband of Roces was a close friend of Estrada's.

Unexpected PNP objection

The Sandiganbayan's decision came although prosecution lawyers did not object to the proposed visit. The Philippine National Police, however, unexpectedly opposed the proposal.

The court said denying the motion was its best recourse owing to the PNP's manifestation that it could not guarantee Estrada's safety with 42 people around.

Justices Francisco Villaruz, Diosdado Peralta and Rodolfo Ponferrada ruled that they were bound to "believe" the position taken by PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao, who said that more celebrity guests would mean more policemen and more funds.

This was the first time in four years that police custodians of Estrada had opposed a request of his lawyers.

The PNP, in its objection, said the national police could ill-afford to deploy more policemen to control the crowd that would come to see the celebrity visitors of Estrada, due to the ongoing antiterror campaign and the funds needed to move additional PNP personnel for any situation that may arise during the proposed visit.

4M crank calls swamp Patrol 117 every year

From page A1

majority of the calls.

Now the bad news: Its 30 nationwide call centers receive an average of four million crank calls a year.

"I've been receiving complaints that nobody answers when they call 117. This is because the calls are on queue. If there are a lot of calls, there will be a delay in answering them," said Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes at a news conference yesterday.

Because of the incredible number of crank calls they receive, the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the Patrol 117 Commission will now charge P5.50 per call and P2.50 per text message.

Better education

"When the public is better educated on the use of the 117 hotline, then we can do away with the charges," Reyes said.

The Foundation for Crime Prevention (FCP), one of the prime movers of Patrol 117, said calling 117 from public phone booths would still be free.

Pay phone booths intended for 117 calls are also strategically located around Metro Manila. These phones, the FCP said, were monitored to verify the identity and sincerity of callers.

To further sift the crank calls from real emergency calls, the DILG and the FCP launched Club 117, whose members are expected to report crimes and other emergencies via the 117 hotline.

With the members' profiles and unique numbers, operators will skip one step in verifying the emergency being reported.

"This is our way of involving everyone, especially the youth in the reporting and monitoring aspect of the national anticrime campaign. We are also continuously developing ways and means to maximize the technological capabilities of 117," said Reyes.

FCP officials said concerned citizens could become members by registering by text. Type: CLUB REG <NAME> <AGE> <LOCATION> and send to 117.

Privileges

Club 117 has a number of privileges for those who fill up membership forms from the FCP and secure ID cards. The forms can be downloaded from www.fcp117.com.ph or requested by fax from the FCP through tel. 889-5013.

The ID card bears a corresponding number for the member, much like the national numbers system proposed by the DILG.

Asked if Club 117 falls neatly into place with the government's proposed national identification system, Reyes said: "Of course. The second level of membership already requires the filling up of application forms and that will help in coming up with the (national ID) database."

"After our soft launch a week ago, at least 1,000 persons have already signified an interest to join the club. We expect an increase in numbers as the launching activity will kick off our seminar-workshops, training programs and lecture series initially in Metro Manila and in the country's key cities," said Celerina Rosales-Amores, FCP executive director.

Club members enjoy discounts on food purchases at Wendy's restaurants, Paparazzi vests, and courses at the Emergency Resource Center and the Taekwondo Training Center.

Movie premiers, seminars, lectures and other forums will also be offered to members on a first-come first-served basis. Weekly updates on crime prevention, first aid, emergency preparedness and related data will be made available to the members via text messaging.

Former bank president found dead; suicide eyed



BORLONGAN

Flowers for the dead

'I love you'

Drilon warns Asean states of risking credibility



FOREIGN ministers of the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations join hands in a gesture of unity ...

Asean foreign ministers split on Burma role

Sacred principle

Singapore ding

3 options

Foreign pressure

Senate caucus on VAT

VAT support tied to antigraft drive . . .

Low awareness

Success factor

Executive-legislative

PCA chief under fire for blocking P8.4-B coco project

Project in every province

No pressure

5 municipalities

Governors against project

Similar to Bugsuk project

Protestant preachers go hi-tech

By Christian V. Esguerra

The Daily Gospel

The WORLD

Japan seeks dialogue amid Beijing rallies

Domestic dynamics drive Japan history feud with Asia



Health teams race to track new Marburg cases



THE NEWLYWEDS

China, India sign accord to resolve border dispute



PACHYDERM SHOWER

Brazil worries it may fight foreign powers for control of Amazon

Strong quake hits Tokyo, reviving fears of 'Big One'



Bangladesh 9-story factory collapses; hundreds feared trapped under rubble





ENTERTAINMENT

Nora's lawyers say they will need very little gov't help

By Volt Contreras



RUDOLPH Valentino and Gloria Swanson in "Rocks"

Valentino's only film with Swanson found

Smashing debut: 'CSI New York'

VIEWFINDER



Nestor U. Torre

Engelbert Humperdinck

ENTERTAINMENT



DIETHER Ocampo's pretty woman

Kristine: Closet makeup artist

ACTRESS Kristine Hermosa owns almost a hundred pairs of slippers. But the pairs dearest to her are those from boyfriend Diether Ocampo.

[illegible]





LET ME tell you about cosmetics ...



"NEVER thought I'd wear wristwatches this big."

SLIPPERS

[illegible]

SHOES

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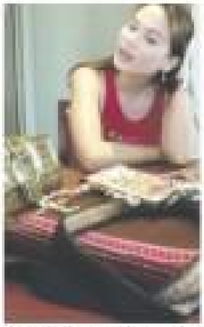
TOPS

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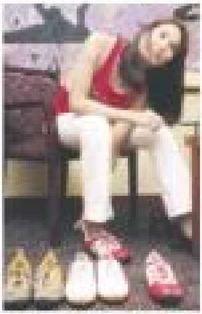
UNDERWEAR

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TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



"MY FAVORITE bags were given by people I love."



RUBBER shoes! 'Go for comfort, not brand.'

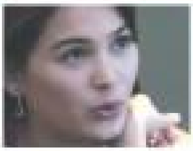






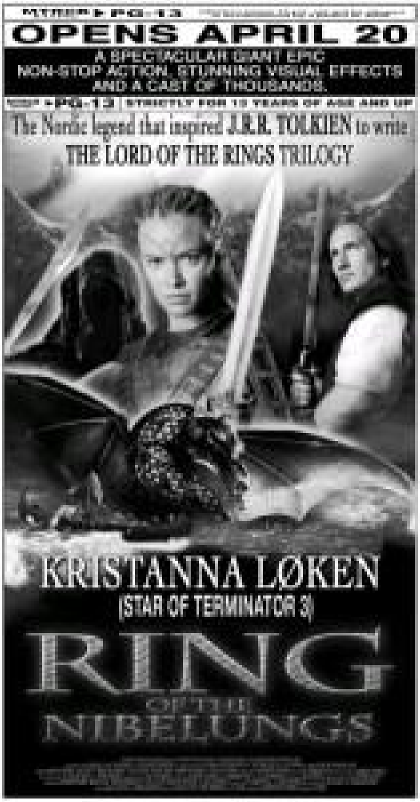
Kristine: Closet makeup artist

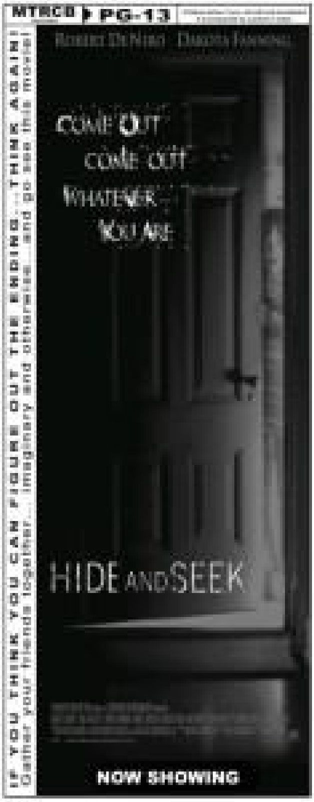
ENTERTAINMENT



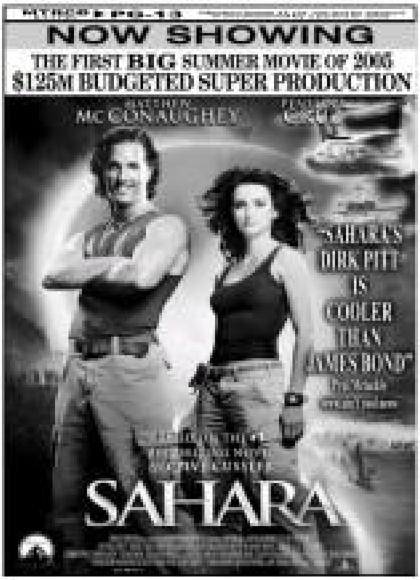


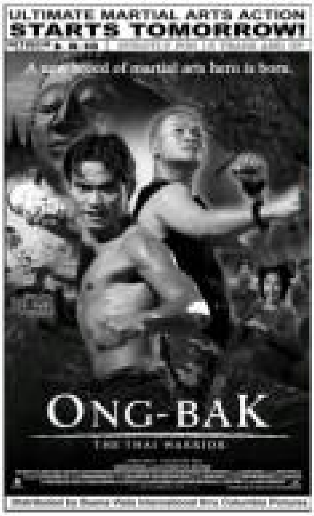






Kristine: Closet makeup artist







INQUIRER

OPINION



Energy options

EDITORIAL

Clogged e-mail boxes

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

Smallness

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

Reforms in papal voting

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



Moving against 'kiddie porn'

AT LARGE



Rina Jimenez-David

Roadmap to disaster

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Randy I. Harper



Arguing as a way of life

YOUNG BLOOD

Anjo Lorenzana

Seeing through JP II's conservatism

LETTERS



POPE John Paul II: Modern world has found a man for all ages.

'Maxi' expense for quality weapon

Taxing the IPPs a matter of equity

An ill-timed song for a loved singer

Disappointed with 'idol'

Inappropriate publication

You're right, our apologies

'Enemies of the state'

Mistaken premise on Schiavo case

What are your memories of Pope John Paul II?



'Jueteng' take of nat'l PNP execs rises, says intel officer

Iriga gov't, foundation give out 200 free houses to city's poor

Cops nab 3 men using fake quarry receipts

Transport strike muscle-flexing, say organizers



Ex-legislator survives grenade attack



TATTOOED STORIES

Cops say Esperat killing solved with arrest of 4

C. Mindanao leader in palay production

Gov pursues village forums to know needs of Cavite folk

Quarry operators' head wounded in gun attack



EVOLUTIONARY FAITH

Board member denies Mikey slapped him

3 paymasters probed for ₱10M in advances

Baguio hotel owners want ID system vs terrorism

New Quiapo

Short term

Cordillera tribe enforces own ID system



SIX-MONTH-OLD Lang-ayan Fileg with his aunt, Jennifer Cardigan, wait for a ritual to baptize and give a name to him during the first Lang-ay Festival last week in Bontoc, Mountain Province.

Lang-ay Festival

Material symbols

Villagers say treasure hunt turned water dirty

Bad food downs 17 in Bulacan wedding rites

Gov, execs open new trail to Mt. Pinatubo

Governors' group vows to fight move to divide Cebu into 4

Pope visit left deep imprint on Tondo parish

Rallying the moment

Doves at her feet

She feels blessed

Shrine for the Pope

Latin America may get its first pontiff

Latins have the numbers

A pope is for the world

Divided clergy

Media savvy

Secret of Fatima

2 brother cops face slay raps

MMDA APPEAL TO PHONE FIRMS

'Stop billboard battle on Edsa'



30-hour water cutoff looms

Mandaluyong folk warned: Segregate garbage or else...

MNLF scores vs government troops anew

ON TARGET



Ramon Tulfo

Pinoy teachers in ISM to get ₱398-M windfall

Proof of compliance

No reasonable distinction

Adjustment of salary

Forum-shopping

Construction of Edsa loading platforms starts

METRO
E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: Inquirer met name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil ■ Assistant Editor Cenon B. Bibe Jr.

Pinoy teachers in ISM to get ₱398-M windfall

By Jerome Aning

A TOTAL of 178 Filipino teachers at the International School Manila (ISM) now stand to get back wages amounting to P398 million.

This was made possible after the Department of Labor and Employment finally resolved the long-drawn issue on the disparity of salary between local- and foreign-hired teachers at the ISM.

In a nine-page order issued on April 4, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas directed the school management and the union to comply with the Supreme Court ruling on the labor dispute.

Sto. Tomas also ordered the execution of a collective bargaining agreement, incorporating provisions that include the adjustment of salary levels of local hires equivalent to those of foreign hires retroactive to July 1, 1995.

"Pursuant to the terms of the 10 June 1996 Decision and 19 March 1997 Resolution, and the 01 June 2000 Supreme Court Decision, the School and the Union are hereby ordered to comply with directives contained therein, and to execute within 10 days from receipt of this Order a Collective Bargaining Agreement," the DOLE order said.

The 178 Filipino teachers at the ISM, some of whom have already retired, were pressing their demand for payment of around $7.3 million (about P398 million) in back wages.

Apart from the economic provision which shall be effective July 1, 1995, to June 30, 1998, the DOLE also ordered the parties to incorporate a provision on the scope of the bargaining unit, with membership in the bargaining unit confined to local hires as well as provisions on retirement pay, sick leave, life

PINOY/A23

Meeting of Metro mall owners pushed

THE GOVERNMENT has to round up all major mall owners at the soonest possible time, to impress upon them the importance of closing their establishments once a week to save on electricity.

"It's up to the government to talk to these big retailers. We have a crisis so we really have to do something," Consumer and Oil Price Watch chair Raul Concepcion said in a briefing yesterday. "All the government has to do is to call these big guys. It's going to be symbolic."

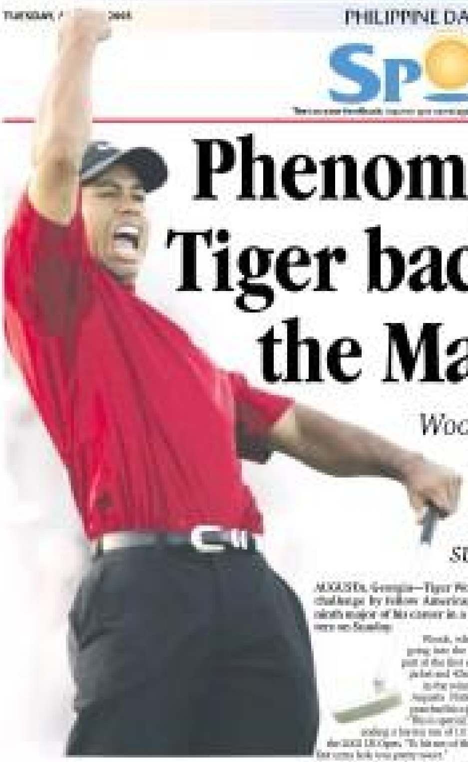
During a multisectoral meeting on energy conservation in Malacañang last week, he suggested that malls close shop once a week to generate much-needed energy savings, in light of high fuel costs.

He said a government-spearheaded meeting with mall owners should be held soon to present the idea to them.

In an earlier interview, Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) president Jaime Ayala said the company would study Concepcion's proposal.

But he warned that closing the malls, even for just one day in a week, would have serious implications on employment. *Abigail L. Ho*

SPORTS



Phenomenal Tiger back as the Master

Woods takes 9th major after surviving DiMarco in sudden-death

AUGUSTA, Georgia—Tiger Woods held off a gutsy last-day challenge by fellow American Chris DiMarco to win the ninth major of his career in a playoff for the 69th US Masters on Sunday.

Woods, who had led DiMarco by three strokes going into the final round, sank an 18-foot birdie putt at the first extra hole to secure his fourth green jacket and 42nd PGA Tour victory.

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ASIAN F3'S QUICKEST

Mikola by a sweep



Ex-caddy puts away Calatagan Am crown

Almazora leads winners

Phenomenal Tiger back as the Master

Pacquiao: I make all the decisions now



PACQUIAO: They thought I knew nothing ... I trusted them.

Payla, Ferrer bow out in King's Cup

BI orders deportation of BAP sec-gen Lim



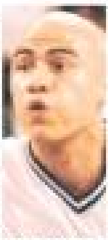
LIM vows to fight order.

PBL-recognized ref school sets new course

Strong start for U-Ha eleven

NCA derby starts today at Big dome

Jewels face tough test vs Wizards



CARDONA: Week's best

Big turnout seen in 4th MY Games

Jets shame RP dribblers

Actor Yllana's five exposes SEAG-bound Nationals' suspect form



Marikina Brown sews up 4th win



Postbumous awards for ex-Olympians

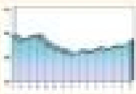
EPSON CUP 2 BADMINTON

Easy sailing for defenders

SMC wins bid for Aussie dairy firm

$1.46B needed to finance takeover

CURRENCIES



STOCK MARKET

Shares end down on fiscal reform delay



Vehicle sales up 4.6% in first quarter

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Investment-to-GDP ratios



Fuel on the hill

BREAKTIME



Conrado R. Banal III

DOF opposes plan to extend SPV law

Market nearing May day rally

MR. BEARBULL

[illegible]

Metrobank declares 60-centavo dividend

By Doris C. Dumlao

[illegible]

Philippine Stock Exchange

Disclosures

ALCORN Gold Resources Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 16, 2 p.m. at the Manila Golf & Country Club.

* * *

GLOBAL Business Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 28, 9 a.m. at the Penthouse of Metrobank Plaza, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of March 15 are entitled to vote during the meeting.

* * *

MANILA Jockey Club Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 29, 9 a.m. at the Legaspi II, The Bellevue Manila, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Only stockholders of record as of March 11 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

MAJORITY of Ayala Alliance Inc.'s stockholders agreed to sell its 30 million shares of the company for over P330.8 million to Mapua Holdings Inc.

* * *

A. SORIANO Company Inc. bought 60,000 of its own shares at P0.86 each.

Compiled by: Marlon B. Dabao, PDI Research

Vehicle sales up . . .

"March sales of AUVs showed a very optimistic growth of 16.6 percent due to relatively stable sales of AUV models and the introduction of a new model of a major player in this segment," they added.

Market giver Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. recently launched its eight-seater MPV Innova. TMPC said this was a replacement of the Revo—an AUV—although the firm classifies the Innova as a minivan.

Company officials said they expected exports of parts to surge due to the initial success of the Innova, which is built in several countries with parts sourced from production hubs such as the Philippines.

In the first quarter, AUV sales went up by 13 percent to 6,263 units while LCV sales went up by 7 percent to 6,790 units.

On the other hand, sales of light trucks as well as those of trucks and buses dipped by 22 percent to 371 units and 122 units, respectively.

TMPC cornered the biggest portion of the overall market, with a 34.3 percent share. Toyota sold 7,308 units from January to March, or 0.6 percent higher than the 7,262 units it sold in the same period last year.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippines Corp. ranked second with 13.3 percent of the market, selling 3,204 vehicles, or 4.6 percent more than the 3,104 units sold the previous year.

LIFESTYLE



LEAD AND BE LED. Grab the moment for a special rendezvous at home.

Unlike women, men are more reluctant to seek medical assistance on sexual health matters



Standing up for the Filipino male

Bum rap

Proper context



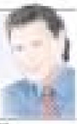






Boracay's gorgeous visitors

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH



Maurice Arcache

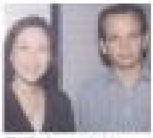














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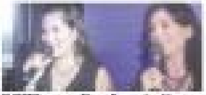














Embodiment of holiness and compassion

INNER AWARENESS





NEW PGH PHARMACY

Special package for boys' 'summer ritual'

Bring down bad cholesterol

Weight-loss aid harnesses power of green tea



A touch of Bollywood



Why children have to play

Standing up for the Filipino male

LifeStyle









With Piolo Pascual wearing its clothes, Diadora had the biggest crowd during the recent Fashion Week

Coolest sportswear for hottest star

Trendy

Layering



Avoiding calories when dining out



WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan



Learn salad bar tricks

Keep things out of sight, out of mind

Master doggie bag tips

Don't pig out at a buffet

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Rubber band pullback on stability ball

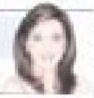
THIS EXERCISE strengthens the muscles at the back of the shoulders and between the shoulder blades.

LIFESTYLE

Life's one sure thing

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino





While uncertainty causes stress, you can transform its destructive energies into something positive

You have a choice

Emotional freedom

Surrendering scribe

Visualization

Unknown to many, the province boasts of breaks almost the whole year round



Surf's up in Eastern Samar

AS EASTERN Samar does not get as many typhoons as its neighbors, surfing may be a year-round activity.



LIMITLESS challenges await both master and amateur surfers.

By Eric N. Aseo
Contributor

FOR THOSE who live to surf and surf to live, and now only to wait when the waves crash to rage, Eastern Samar beckons and shows compassion.

With more than 200 km of shoreline facing the mighty Pacific Ocean, Eastern Samar offers limitless challenges to masters and amateur surfers alike.

No wonder the province is fast becoming a favorite surfing destination.

Eastern Samar is located northeast of Tacloban City, the regional center. To reach Borongan, the capital, visitors can fly to Tacloban from Manila. Those coming from Cebu can take a fast craft to Ormoc City and travel by van to Tacloban, then to Borongan.

The province draws surfers because of the year-round breaks in spots set against tropical backdrops. Some of the spots are already known to locals and foreigners. Others are still waiting to be discovered.

Surfing spots

The most famous of the surfing spots is Calicoan Island in Guiuan. The island is a two-hour drive from Tacloban City. With world-class reef breaks, the surfing season here is from March to October, interrupted only occasionally by tropical storms.

The spot on Calicoan Island, which has white sand, is so wide it can accommodate several surfers at the same time. Surfers can find left and right breaks here and even catch an occasional tube ride.

A high-end resort is currently being constructed on the island and will open in August. Calicoan is being considered as a venue for an international surfing competition in October. Originally the competition was going to be held in Sri Lanka, but the tsunami prompted organizers to look for alternative venues.

Several spots are found in Borongan—Bagbag, Baras, Suribao and Sabang. Easily accessible from the town center, these spots are ideal for beginners. They offer nice beach breaks from December to March.

Another surfing spot is in Omawas, Maydolong, some 18 kilometers south of Borongan.

Farther south is the Llorente beach break. Located at the back of the municipal hall, the spot is very accessible but is more suitable for seasoned surfers, as it is a deep water spot. Breaks here can be very powerful. The spot is found near two river mouths resulting in quite strong undercurrents.

Up north is the Maliwi Island reef break which can be reached by boat from Sulat or Taft. The island is ideal for beach camping, but the spot is reportedly shark-infested though local surfers have yet to see one.

Comparative advantage

The entire coastline of Eastern Samar is practically surfing ground as it directly faces the Pacific Ocean. Every surfer will be able to find his or her own spot.

And, unlike those surfing spots in places facing the South China Sea which are only suitable from December to March, year-round surfing, except in June and July, flat months, is possible here.

Eastern Samar also has the advantage of not being as typhoon-prone as some of its neighbors. Thus, the coastlines here are seldom disturbed, thus the breaks are often consistent.

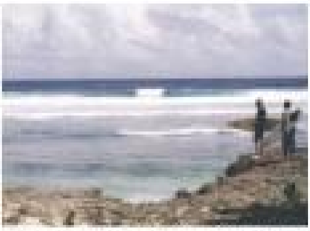
Waves from all directions are also found in Eastern Samar, so surfing is possible in some spot regardless of wind direction.

Moreover, unlike other surfing areas in the country, surfing spots in the province are protected from strong winds that destroy the breaks.

Who to call up

The Eastern Samar Surfers' Association (ESSA) offers surfing clinics and packaged surf tours in the province. It also organizes surfing competitions.

Call ESSA's [illegible] at [illegible] and [illegible] or text [illegible] at [illegible].



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